



Air Force Medical Service Global Health Engagement Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How does the Department of Defense define Global Health Engagement?**

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) defines Global Health Engagement (GHE) as public health and medical-related actions and programs undertaken by the DoD to improve foreign armed forces' or foreign civilian authorities' health system capacity, while promoting and strengthening their human and/or animal health systems in support of national security objectives.

2. **Why is the military involved in Global Health Engagement?**

Healthy populations directly correlate to healthy nations and stable governments. Part of the Department of Defense's mission is to help ensure geopolitical stability and security. Global Health Engagement activities support various soft-power goals connected to national security objectives. These can include partner access, capability building activities, and international humanitarian crises and natural disaster response assistance.

3. **How does military medicine involvement support national security objectives?**

The U.S. military global health engagement strategies reduce long-term threats to our national security by assisting in the process of building stable, prosperous, and healthy societies. Through its global presence and provision of medical resources, the Department of Defense (DoD) has a unique opportunity to impact global health with partner nations and regions of interest to our nation.

4. **How does the Air Force Medical Service define its Global Health Engagement?**

The Air Force Medical Service's (AFMS) Global Health Engagement (GHE) efforts strive to prevent, protect, and respond to regional or global security challenges through development of partnerships and trust with allies, partners, and host nations. We focus on enhancing capability and capacity for force health protection and health services promoting stability and security, responding to contingency needs, humanitarian crises, and natural disaster assistance requests in support of the U.S. and its partners.

5. **Who does the Air Force Medical Service work with in support of Global Health Engagement activities?**

The Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) works to deliver synchronized and effective Global Health Engagement (GHE) in support of the U.S. Government and Geographic Combatant Commanders' security cooperation objectives. The AFMS GHE teams collaborate with allies, partners, host nations, other government agencies, and sister Services in an effort to strengthen international alliances and partnerships. The AFMS supports and advises the Department of Defense's (DoD) global health working groups on how DoD measures its efforts, provides provisions of care, and builds international capabilities for strategic planning and operations. As necessary, the AFMS participates as interagency liaisons seeking to better collaborate with partner countries' military and civilian agencies.



6. What entities are included in the Air Force Medical Service Global Health Engagement activities?

The Air Force Medical Service's Global Health Engagement (GHE) assets include the **International Health Specialist (IHS)** program developed in 2000 by former U.S. Air Force Surgeon General Lt Gen Paul K. Carlton, Jr., (USAF retired), to extend operational reach of the Joint Forces; The **Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO)** to enhance partner nation capability, force health protection, homeland defense, and health services; the **USAF School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM)** to optimize partner nation airpower concepts; and the **Uniformed University of the Health Sciences (USU)** to provide education and training to prepare uniformed health professionals in support of the National Security and National Defense Strategies of the United States.

- **IHS** members engage in building global health partnerships and partner-nation capability through military to military and military to civilian health engagements, stability operations, security cooperation and support of U.S. government humanitarian and disaster response efforts for national security objectives.
- **DIMO** facilitates professional development and exchanges among countries, with the goal of creating a shared desire to promote and implement global health. These courses emphasize international healthcare bridges, disaster preparedness, communicable disease prevention, and other current healthcare issues.
- **USAFSAM** is the premier institute for research, education, and worldwide operational consultation in Aerospace Medicine. Its mission is to advance aerospace medicine to enhance the health and performance of those they serve through education, research and consultation.
- **USUHS** educates, trains, and prepares uniformed services health professionals, officers and leaders to directly support Military Health, the National Security and National Defense Strategies of the United States and the readiness of our Armed Forces.

7. What are the key policies that inform the Global Health Engagement activities for the Air Force Medical Service?

The documents directing Department of Defense (DoD) and Air Force Medical Service's global health activities include:

- **National Security Strategy** (White House, 2015) "We will lead with capable partners, mobilizing collective action and building partner capacity to address global challenges...Developing a global capacity to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to biological threats like Ebola through the Global Health Security Agenda."
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/06/fact-sheet-2015-national-security-strategy>
- **Global Health Security Agenda** (White House, 2015) "In partnership with U. S. government sister agencies, other nations, international organizations and public and



private stakeholders, CDC seeks to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease and to promote global health security as an international security priority.”

- Preventing and reducing the likelihood of outbreaks – natural, accidental, or intentional – is essential.
- Detecting threats early saves lives.
- Rapid, effective response requires multi-sectoral, international coordination and communication.

<http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/security/ghsagenda.htm>

- **National Security Strategy** (White House, 2010) “The United States has a moral and strategic interest in promoting global health...and we are promoting the dignity of all men and women through our support for global health, food security, and cooperative responses to humanitarian crises.” PDF available for download. http://osce.usmission.gov/national_security_strategy_2010.html
- **National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats** (White House, 2009) “Many nations struggle daily to address the impact of naturally-occurring infectious disease within their borders...We will seek to advance access to and effective use of technologies to mitigate the impact from outbreaks of infectious disease, regardless of their cause.” https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/National_Strategy_for_Countering_BioThreats.pdf
- **National Military Strategy** (DoD, 2011) “The military shall actively partner with other U.S. government agencies to pursue theater security cooperation...humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities employ the Joint Force to address partner needs and sometimes provide opportunities to build confidence and trust between erstwhile adversaries.” PDF available for download from index. <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2011-National-Military-Strategy.pdf>
- **Quadrennial Defense Review** (DoD 2014) The QDR builds on the previous policy document stating: “Build security globally, to preserve regional stability, deter adversaries, support allies and partners, and cooperate with others to address common security challenges. PDF available for download from index. http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0314_sdr/qdr.aspx
- **Quadrennial Defense Review** (DoD, 2010) “Circumstances are ripe for violent ideologies to spread among population when governments struggle to provide basic services, justice and security, or the conditions for economic opportunity. Civil affairs forces address these threats by serving as the vanguard of DoD’s support to U.S. government efforts to assist partner governments in the fields of rule of law, economic stability, governance, public health and welfare, infrastructure, and public education and information.” “Detecting, diagnosing, determining the origin of a pathogen will enable U.S. authorities to better respond to future disease outbreaks and identify whether they are natural or man-made. Accordingly, we are expanding the biological threat reduction program...in order to create a global network for



surveillance and response.” PDF available for download from index.
http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0314_sdr/qdr.aspx

- **SECDEF Policy Guidance** (May 2013) In a speech, Kathleen H. Hicks, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, defined the parameters of global health engagement and stressed the importance of building sustainable partner nation capacity; synchronizing with civilian agencies to complement broader U.S. Government health programs; and dedicating sufficient resources for measurement and evaluation. To see an article about her views on global health engagement use this link. <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=120064>
- **2011 USAF Global Partnership Strategy** “For its part, the USAF [U.S. Air Force] offers a service-wide strategy detailing the avenues for developing partner nation relationships, securing access, and improving partner nation capabilities and capacity in air, space, and cyberspace.” “Specifically, the USAF seeks to: employ USAF security cooperation activities in support of coalition efforts to counter violent extremism; collaborate with partner Air Forces to deter and defeat aggression; strengthen international and regional security; and shape the future coalition Air Force.” The complete document is available here:
<http://www.disamjournal.org/articles/usaf-global-partnership-strategy-1127> .

8. **How does the Air Force Medical Service support and advise the Department of Defense policy requirements concerning Global Health Engagement?** The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act required the development of a process to ensure that health engagements are effective and efficient in meeting national security goals. AFMS is represented in activities such as:
 - a. The Global Health Engagement Cell which is working to provide guidance to combatant commands and drafting instruction to govern global health engagement activities
 - b. The Global Health Working Group charged with: (1) provision of care guidelines incorporating standards of care, medical ethics and credentialing/licensing; (2) measure of effectiveness process and learning tool to ensure global health engagement activities meet U.S. security goals and establishing learning tool that assesses efficiency and effectiveness of health engagements; (3) global health capability strategic plan, or concept of operations for DoD global health capability.
9. **Where is military medicine currently involved in Global Health Engagement?** Global Health Engagement operations are taking place around the world, including Central Command, Africa Command, Northern Command, Southern Command, Pacific Command, and European Command.
10. **Where can I go to find out more about the Air Force Medical Service’s Global Health Engagement?**
The following contact information is available for each of the key Air Force Medical Service’s assets supporting Global Health Engagement efforts:



- **International Health Specialist Program:** Program office—DSN 761-8129; Comm: (703) 681-8129 usaf.pentagon.af-sg.mbx.ihs-program-office@mail.mil; IHS ANG Liaison-Comm: (703) 601-0588; DSN: 329-0588 and www.facebook.com/AirForceIHS. Additional resource <http://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil>
- **Defense Institute for Medical Operations—** <http://www.dimo.af.mil>
- **U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine—** <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/afrl/711hpw/usafsam.asp>
- **Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences—** <http://www.usuhs.mil/>